

IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A voice messaging system, comprising:
an analog telephone line interface;
a voice recorder/playback module;
a controller adapted to control functions of said voice messaging system; and

a ring signal bypass module adapted to detect a presence of an analog non-ring signal initiated by a caller without prompt utilizing said analog telephone line interface indicating a presence of an incoming call, and to cause said voice messaging system to direct said incoming call to said voice recorder/playback module without an audible ring signal to announce said incoming call by said voice messaging system and to bypass an outgoing greeting message associated with a called party.

2. (previously presented) The voice messaging system according to claim 1, wherein:

said analog telephone line interface is adapted to detect a line reversal on said telephone line.

3. (original) The voice messaging system according to claim 1, wherein:

said voice messaging system is a telephone answering device.

4. (currently amended) A method of allowing bypass of a ring signal in a voice messaging system, comprising:

receiving an analog non-ring signal initiated by a caller without prompt at an analog telephone line interface indicating a presence of an incoming call to said voice messaging system; and

answering said incoming call by said voice messaging system without an audible ring signal to announce said incoming call by said voice messaging system; and

bypassing an outgoing greeting message associated with a called party.

5. (previously presented) The method of allowing bypass of a ring signal in a voice messaging system according to claim 4, wherein said answering comprises:

playing an outgoing greeting message to a caller associated with said incoming call without requiring reception of any ring signal relating to said incoming call; and

allowing said caller to record a voice message.

6. (previously presented) The method of allowing bypass of a ring signal in a voice messaging system according to claim 4, wherein said answering comprises:

allowing a caller associated with said incoming call to record a voice message without requiring reception of any ring signal relating to said incoming call.

7. (canceled)

8. (currently amended) Apparatus for allowing bypass of a ring signal in a voice messaging system, comprising:

means for receiving an analog non-ring signal initiated by a caller at an analog telephone line interface indicating a presence of an incoming call to said voice messaging system; and

means for answering said incoming call by said voice messaging system without an audible ring signal to announce said incoming call by said voice messaging system; and

means for bypassing an outgoing greeting message associated with a called party.

9. (previously presented) The apparatus for allowing bypass of a ring signal in a voice messaging system according to claim 8, wherein said means for answering comprises:

means for playing an outgoing greeting message to a caller associated with said incoming call without requiring reception of any ring signal relating to said incoming call; and

means for allowing said caller to record a voice message.

10. (previously presented) The apparatus for allowing bypass of a ring signal in a voice messaging system according to claim 8, wherein said means for answering comprises:

means for allowing a caller associated with said incoming call to record a voice message without requiring reception of any ring signal relating to said incoming call.

11. (previously presented) The apparatus for allowing bypass of a ring signal in a voice messaging system according to claim 8, further comprising:

means for inputting a request for a transmission of said analog non-ring signal from a calling party's telephone.

12. (currently amended) A method of allowing a calling party to bypass a ring signal in a voice messaging system of a called party, said voice messaging system including voice message memory for recording a voice message, the method comprising:

providing an analog ring signal bypass module in said voice messaging system;

activating said analog ring signal bypass module based on a request from said calling party without prompt from said voice messaging system; and

bypassing an audible ring signal by said voice messaging system announcing an incoming call from said calling party to said voice messaging system; and

bypassing an outgoing greeting message associated with a called party.

13. (previously presented) The method of allowing a calling party to bypass a ring signal in a voice messaging system of a called party according to claim 12, further comprising:

allowing said calling party to record a voice message in said voice message memory before reception of any analog ring signal.

14. (previously presented) The method of allowing a calling party to bypass a ring signal in a voice messaging system of a called party according to claim 12, further comprising:

entering a request for performance of said step of bypassing all analog ring signals by said calling party.

15. (original) The method of allowing a calling party to bypass a ring signal in a voice messaging system of a called party according to claim 12, wherein:

said request is entered by said calling party before a telephone number of said called party is dialed by said calling party.

16. (canceled)

17. (canceled)

18. (canceled)

19. (canceled)

20. (canceled)

21. (canceled)